

Mississippi Forestry Commission  
Safety Council Meeting Minutes  
July 18, 2006

Attendees: Steve Williams (Chairperson), Bob Ponder, Greg Bourque, Greg Chatham, Danny Moore, Louis Ray, Michael Sherman, Philip Wilson, Jeff Ware, Jan Baker, John Walker, Doug VanDevender, Ed Brown, Dale Brown, Todd Matthews, Everard Baker, and Charlie Morgan.

Welcome: Steve Williams

Announcements:

Steve Williams announced that Charlie Morgan would be coming in around lunch time and we would work our agenda a little different so he would be here for the Safety Manual Revision Review.

Election:

Steve stated that we needed to elect a new secretary for the Safety Council. The name of George Byrd was put before the group. There being no other names recommended, George was elected by acclamation.

Topics for Discussion:

Defensive Driving – John Walker brought up the topic of Defensive Driving. Most everyone that has had the course is either in the last year of their currency or it has already expired. Each district safety officer will check to see if someone in their district can teach this course to all employees that drive a MFC vehicle. Half of the district personnel would be trained one day and the other half the next. John Walker will handle setting up the course for the State Office and EMS.

Motion was made by Greg Chatham and seconded by Todd Matthews to offer the defensive driving courses. Motion passed.

Workmen's Comp and Accident Reports – John Walker handed out the FY '06 Statewide Accident Summary and the Workmen's Comp reports to be reviewed by the committee. Several items were discussed on both reports. Of the 52 accidents listed, 21 were vehicle accidents and 31 were for other various reasons. This seemed to solidify the need for Defensive Driving. On the Workmen's Comp summary, it was pointed out that the premium cost comes out of salary dollars. Members were asked to share this information with their various locations to heighten all employees' awareness.

Breathing Apparatus – Todd Matthews brought up the use of breathing apparatus on fires. The group discussed this in length with both pros and cons presented. Todd will do

further research as to the type of breathing apparatus would be the most suitable for our purposes.

#### Round Robin:

Greg Bourque - gave report on the new radio system. System is installed, but working out a few bugs.

Greg Chatham – brought up the need for ice makers in counties. Alternative that was discussed was that some districts/counties have small chest freezers that are periodically stocked by bulk ice companies or by purchasing ice at various retail locations and storing in the freezers for use as needed.

Danny Moore – would like to get a list of immediate safety related needs on buildings (ie: wiring, steps, rails, etc.)

Louis Ray – brought up hard to read display on the older radios. Referred to Greg Bourque. Solution will be the new radios as they are installed.

Michael Sherman – brought up the possibility of purchasing camelback water containers for individuals. This should be decided by each district as budget permits.

Steve Williams – brought up the issue of a ranger going to a fire by himself. After much discussion, a motion was made by John Walker for the following wording to be added to the Safety Manual: The preferred method of fire suppression is a two person crew. However, in the event life or property is threatened, appropriate actions should be taken. The motion was seconded by Ed Brown and passed unanimously. Since the Safety Manual Revision was discussed later in the meeting, this was added to the list of changes needed.

Jeff Ware – reiterated ice needs

Ed Brown – stated he was leaving with some ideas on how to address the ice needs in the SCD. Also, discussed other heat issues.

Todd Matthews – work/rest ratio issues. Stated that his district had a problem with crews getting proper rest. Said some of it could be a management problem and thought it was being handled. Wanted to know what could be done to manage crew fire time because fatigue is a safety issue. Recommendation was to check out the Standby Committee notes to see if this was addressed in their report and to discuss further at the next meeting.

#### Other Issues:

Steve/Dale – brought up the old fire towers. Need to get rid of all un-needed towers. Maybe get a contractor to take down these towers statewide.

Steve – handed out an article on DEET and NOMEX clothing. Use of DEET could effect the fire resistance of the NOMEX clothing.

Also, handed out an e-mail from Randy Chapin to the Equipment Committee suggesting a headache rack for the new transport trucks. After reading the e-mail and further discussion on the matter, Danny Moore suggested making a retrofit of the 1999 and newer model trucks with the same design. It was decided that this would be a district decision as budgets permit.

Revision to the MFC Safety Manual:

Bob Ponder handed out the revisions to the MFC Safety Manual that had been proposed at the last meeting of the Safety Council on May 30, 2006. A couple of items were “tweaked” in the wording. Also, the statement mentioned earlier about the makeup of a crew was added.

After a discussion by the group, it was decided to go back to the original wording on ATV helmets. After review of the language on page C-7 under the topic **Safety-Related Subjects**, it was determined that we would be violating our own manual if we allowed hardhats to be worn on ATV’s. The proposed language would have allowed the use of hardhats in some situations.

On page 4 of the recommendations, a training package entitled ‘**Bogged Tractor Recovery Training Material**’ was referenced. Many of the committee members were unfamiliar with this material. Steve looked back in the meeting notes and found a copy. This was copied and passed out to committee members.

These revisions will be typed and presented to Charlie Morgan State Forester, for his approval. After approval, a new Safety Manual will be printed and distributed to all employees.

Old Business:

Hard Hat Program was discussed. Recommendation will be made to the State Forester for his approval of changes to the program. The changes will be to add two other color hardhats to the program. These would be Dark Green for over 15 but not more than 20 years and White for over 25 but not over 30 years. The old program went to ten year increments after 10 years. Once approved, this will be sent to Angela Wade for updating the Safety Page on the web.

New Business:

Charlie Morgan stated we need to come up with “recordable accident” information. A recordable accident would be one where stitches were required, prescription drugs were

filled, or lost time acquired. Need the total incident rate per 1000 hours worked and lost workday incident rate per number of hours lost.

As the new State Forester, Charlie said his goal is to have an accident free workplace. To accomplish this, personal acceptance of responsibility for safety and recognition of responsibility for others safety is the key. This attitude of safety will carry over to our off-time too.

Don't continue to operate unsafe equipment. Get it fixed. Work as a team for safety awareness. Implement a 'lock out' policy until the equipment is fixed.

Next Meeting: October 19, 2006 at the SRFTC.

Meeting adjourned!